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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2521

Aug. 30, 1991

HAYING & GRAZING OPENED UP -- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan says he will permit, under carefully prescribed conditions, haying & grazing of CRP acreage in eligible counties because of the impact of drought on the availability of livestock feed in several isolated parts of the country. "We would prefer not to hay or graze CRP lands," Madigan said. "We are responding to isolated situations with a cautious, prudent program that sustains the environmental protections that are the heart of the CRP." Contact: Robert Feist (202) 447-6789.

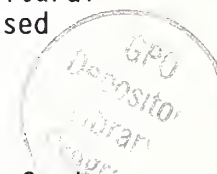
OLD ENEMIES CATCH UP -- Foreign bugs that will be potential enemies of weed & insect pests already in the United States arrived from foreign countries in record numbers last year. Scientists at USDA overseas labs shipped an estimated 402,766 pest-fighting insects & mites in 1990, says Richard Soper, who heads USDA's research program on natural pest controls. "Most crop-damaging insects and weeds in the United States came from somewhere else, but left their natural enemies behind," Soper says. "We want to turn the tables on the pests by bringing their worst adversaries to this country." Contact: Richard Soper (301) 344-3930.

REFERENCE GUIDE TO TRADE AVAILABLE -- USDA has just released "*Desk Reference Guide to U.S. Agricultural Trade*" -- a practical and up-to-date reference source for those involved with international trade of U.S. food & ag products. The publication presents a comprehensive overview of the various aspects of U.S. ag trade from both an export & import perspective. A limited number of copies are available to the media only. Contact: FAS Information Division (202) 447-7937.

VEGETABLE ACREAGE UP -- USDA economists say summer harvest for major fresh-market vegetables is up 5 percent from 1990. Tomato harvest is estimated at 61,200 acres, 6 percent higher than a year earlier and the highest in four years. Lettuce acreage harvested is estimated at 6 percent higher than last year, at 40,400. Overall, shipments of fresh specialty vegetables during the first half of 1991 were up 10 percent over last year. Contact: Gary Lucier (202) 219-0884.

GRADING SERVICE FEES -- USDA is proposing to raise fees & revise methods for calculating certain fees charged for fresh fruit & vegetable grading & certification services at terminal markets. Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, says USDA is proposing the fee changes to offset the increased costs associated with employee salaries, benefits & inflation. The last fee increase was in March of 1986. Contact: Carolyn Coutts (202) 447-8998.

RECORD CATTLE ON FEED -- On Aug. 1, there were 7.35 million cattle & calves on feed for slaughter market. This figure is up 5 percent from last year & 9 percent above Aug. 1, 1989. This is the largest August number since 1978. Contact: Bob Cole (202) 447-2127.



RURAL TRENDS -- Many observers believe the recession that started in July 1990 may have ended, according to the Summer issue of "*Rural Conditions and Trends*." The recovery is expected to be moderate after the relatively mild recession. Just the ending of the recession is unlikely to significantly lower unemployment rates in remote, less developed rural counties with sizable minority populations. Contact: Karen Hamrick (202) 219-0782.

TREES HELP PREVENT GLOBAL WARMING -- Trees can help keep the Earth's temperature under control, says USDA physicist **Sherwood B. Idso**. "My study shows that when trees grow in air containing twice as much carbon dioxide as is now in our atmosphere, they'll trap over three times as much carbon dioxide as they normally do," Idso says. "When trees trap carbon dioxide, or CO₂, they're removing it from the atmosphere." Contact: **Sherwood B. Idso** (602) 379-4356.

EGG PRODUCTION UP -- U.S. egg production totaled 5.84 billion during July, up 2 percent from the 5.70 billion produced a year ago. During July there were 271 million laying hens, also up 2 percent from last year. July egg production per 100 layers was 2,152, compared with 2,143 in July 1990. Contact: **Robert E. Little** (202) 447-6147.

UNDERSTANDING GLOBAL CHANGE -- The current structure of hydrological science & its supporting research grant program does not provide for a coherent understanding of water's complex role in the planetary environment, says **Peter S. Eagleson**, a professor of civil engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Eagleson presented USDA's 1991 **Sterling B. Hendricks Memorial Lecture** Aug. 27 in New York at the annual meeting of the American Chemical Society, which co-sponsors the lecture. Contact: **Kim Kaplan** (301) 344-4504.

FARMS WITHOUT PROGRAM PAYMENTS -- In 1987 & 1988, two-thirds of all farms, or 1.4 million, did not receive direct support from federal farm programs, says USDA economist **Robert D. Reinsel**. Not all farmers receive support from the government & the characteristics of those who do not receive payments differ greatly from those of farmers who did, Reinsel says. Farms which did not receive payments accounted for about one-half of the land in farms and one-half of the sales of farm products in 1987. These data for 1987 & 1988 are the first such data published by the census of agriculture. Contact: **Robert D. Reinsel** (202) 219-0689.

SUGAR MARKETS STATS -- For the second quarter of 1991, U.S. sugar consumption was 4.1 million short tons, 2 percent above a year ago. Sugar exports for the second quarter of 1991 were 295,542 short tons, up 12 percent from this time last year. Domestic production for the Mainland U.S. for the second quarter of 1991 was 2.54 million short tons, up 34 percent from last year. Contact: **Darwin Ransom** (202) 447-7621.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1786 -- Today's family is a busy one -- what with both parents working & children hurrying to after-school activities. It's no wonder that families must schedule meetings. On this edition of **Agriculture USA**, **Brenda Curtis** talks with **Montgomery County, Md.**, extension family life specialist **Susan Morris** about the importance of communication within the family unit. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1268 -- A different type of radio; testing well water; arachnophobia; basket making; a new breed. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1776 -- **USDA News Highlights**; **CRP haying & grazing**; **new crop uses**; **boosting watermelon consumption**; **U.S. fruit juices pop up in Japanese vending machines**. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1435 -- **Measuring vitamin A**; **Hispanics & vitamin A**; **seeing in the dark**; **how much molybdenum**; **milk & iron absorption**. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- **Tues., Sept. 10**, weekly weather & crop outlook; **Wed., Sept. 11**, U.S. crop production, world ag supply & demand; **Fri., Sept. 13**, milk production, world ag grain situation, world oilseed situation, world cotton situation. (These are the **USDA reports we know about in advance**. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling!)

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on how to avoid lyme disease, which is spread by the deer tick; **Lynn Wyvill** reports on low-maintenance gardening; **Joe Courson** of the Univ. of Georgia reports on a yard plant disease.

ACTUALITIES -- **USDA meteorologist Norton Strommen** with a crop & weather update; **USDA economist Steve MacDonald** on U.S. farm trade figures; **USDA economist Nathan Childs** with the latest ag outlook; **USDA economist Ed Allen** on U.S. wheat production; **USDA economist Gary Lucier** on U.S. vegetable production.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on Iowa's "Living History Farms;" **Lynn Wyvill** reports on **USDA's Packers & Stockyards Administration**; **DeBoria Janifer** reports on **USDA's Forest Service partnerships**.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of **USDA farm program info**, in news desk format with **B-Roll footage**.

Available on Satellite **Westar 4**, **Transponder 12D (Channel 23)**, audio **6.2 or 6.8**:

THURSDAY7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT
SATURDAY10 - 10:45 a.m., EDT
MONDAY8 - 8:45 a.m., EDT

OFFMIKE

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS WHEAT...was hit by rust, prompting many producers to plow it under & plant soybeans, says **Bill Mason** (WGEL, Greenville, Ill.). Bill says timely rains in the southwestern section of the state helped it escape the drought; crops are doing well in most of the areas. Bill says he has noticed that competition & mobility in the meat industry is causing changes that are reflected in sales at terminal markets.

CANTALOUPE CAMPAIGN...was covered by **Hap Larson** (KBUF, Garden City, Kan.) to help producers in the station's service area of Kansas & Colorado. Coverage included how 'lopes are grown, processed & shipped to market. Station has also covered events in the USSR. The developments were of major interest to wheat producers. Hap says growers will be carefully selecting wheat varieties this year for properties needed to combat disease & pests. Milo harvest is underway, the crop looks good.

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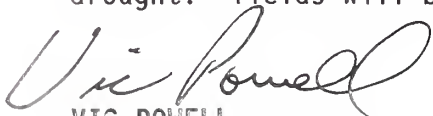
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SMALL GRAINS HARVEST...is going well, says **Ole Olson** (KSJB, Jamestown, N.D.). Row crops are nearly ready to harvest. Soybeans, sunflowers & corn look good. Ole says wheat didn't do well in his area, weather was too hot too early -- creating good stems but small heads.

DRYLAND CROPS...are showing results of drought, says **Susan Risinger** (WJAG, Norfolk, Neb.). Several producers report that corn was not pollinated & soybeans are drying. Irrigating crops is becoming more expensive, reducing profitability. Susan says the station is looking for a full-time farm director. Contact **Mark Smith**, operations manager, at (402) 371-0780.

CLEANING STORAGE BINS...is even more important this year because stressed crops can be more vulnerable to insects & mold, says **Gary Kinnett** (WIAI, Danville, Ill.). Gary sent pictures of soybeans & corn in his area stunted by drought. Yields will be down for sure.



VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division